

PSALMS 140 and 141

In this psalm of David we find no personal vengeance, only simple trust in Yahweh, who maintains the cause of the afflicted and dispenses justice for the poor. When most wounded by undeserved persecution and wicked lies, David was glad to leave matters at the foot of the throne, where they would be safe with the King of kings.

Psalm 140

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 1 Rescue me, O YAHWEH, from evil men; preserve me from violent men
- 2 who devise evil things in *their* hearts; they continually stir up wars.
- 3 They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah

- 4 Keep me, O YAHWEH, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men who have purposed to trip up my feet.
- 5 The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set snares for me. Selah

- 6 I said to YAHWEH, "You are my God; give ear, O YAHWEH, to the voice of my supplications.
- 7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle.
- 8 Do not grant, O YAHWEH, the desires of the wicked; do not promote his *evil* device, *that they not* be exalted." Selah

- 9 "As for the head of those who surround me, may the mischief of their lips cover them.
- 10 May burning coals fall upon them; may they be cast into the fire, into deep pits from which they cannot rise.
- 11 May a slanderer not be established in the earth; may evil hunt the violent man speedily."

- 12 I know that YAHWEH will maintain the cause of the afflicted and justice for the poor.
- 13 Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; the upright will dwell in Your presence.

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The occasion for the writing of Psalm 141 is not known. However, there are many commentators who are strongly of the opinion that it was written as a memorial of that very interesting scene in the life of David, recorded in 1 Samuel 24, relating to his generous treatment of Saul. Though he had an opportunity of putting his cruel persecutor to death in the cave of Engedi, yet David spared his life. And when Saul had gone out of the cave,

David, going out after him, urged him from some distance in the gentlest and most respectful language to reconsider the injustice of Saul's conduct toward him. It is thought that the sixth verse contains so express a reference to this very remarkable occurrence in David's history, as to leave little doubt that it was the occasion on which the Psalm was composed.

Psalm 141
A Psalm of David

- 1 O YAHWEH, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You!
- 2 May my prayer be counted as incense before You;
the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.
- 3 Set a guard, O YAHWEH, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.
- 4 Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice deeds of wickedness with men
who do iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies.

- 5 Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me;
it is oil upon the head; do not let my head refuse it,
for still my prayer is against their wicked deeds.
- 6 Their judges are thrown down by the sides of the rock,
and they hear my words, for they are pleasant.
- 7 As when one plows and breaks open the earth,
our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

- 8 For my eyes are toward You, O GOD, the Lord;
in You I take refuge; do not leave me defenseless.
- 9 Keep me from the jaws of the trap which they have set for me,
and from the snares of those who do iniquity.
- 10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I pass by safely.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, your mercy is great toward all mankind. You sent your only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to make an atonement for sin. All who will may come for life eternal through his shed blood. The road on which we travel is filled with pitfalls, temptations abound all about us, and Satan goes about in full vigor seeking whom he may devour. Be our refuge and strength, O God, be our strong tower where we can flee for shelter, and be our anchor of hope when we become discouraged. Open our eyes to see your providence working for us, and give us grateful hearts for such mercy and grace extended to us. We ask in the name of our Savior and Intercessor, Messiah Jesus. Amen.